

**Thomas Jefferson to Archibald Stuart, August 8, 1811 , from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.**

**TO ARCHIBALD STUART<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> From the original in the possession of the Virginia Historical Society.

Monticello, Aug. 8, 11.

Dear Sir, —I ask the favor of you to purchase for me as much fresh timothy seed as the inclosed bill will pay for, pack & forward, and that you will have the goodness to direct it to be lodged at Mr. Leitch's store in Charlottesville by the waggoner who brings it. You see how bold your indulgencies make me in intruding on your kindness.

I do not know that the government means to make known what has passed between them & Foster before the meeting of Congress but in the meantime individuals, who are in the way, think they have a right to fish it out and in this way the sum of it has become known. Great Britain has certainly come forward and declared to our government by an official paper that the conduct of France towards her during this war has obliged her to take possession of the ocean, and to determine that no commerce shall be carried on with the nations connected with France, that however she is disposed to relax in this determination so far as to permit the commerce which may be carried on thro the British ports. I have, for 3 or 4 years been confident, that knowing her own resources were not adequate to the maintenance of her present navy, she meant with it to claim the conquest of the ocean, and to permit no nation to navigate it, but on payment of a tribute for the maintenance of the fleet necessary to secure that dominion. A thousand circumstances brought together

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left me without a doubt that that policy directed all her conduct, altho' not avowed. This is the first time she has thrown off the mask. The answer & conduct of the government have been what they ought to have been, & Congress is called a little earlier, to be ready to act on the receipt of the reply, for which time has been given. God bless you. Prom yours affectionately.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jefferson further wrote to Stuart:

“Monticello, Nov. 14, 11.

“Dear Sir,—We have safely received the cask of timothy seed, as also the very excellent parcel of butter which you have been so kind as to send us; for which be pleased to accept my thanks, or properly request you to tender them with my respects to Mrs. Stuart.

“You have, day since, seen the most excellent, national & dignified message of the president, & the documents accompanying it. In these you see the British government have openly avowed that they will enforce their orders of council, that is, will keep exclusive possession of the ocean, until France will allow her manufactures to go in the ships of other nations into the continent of Europe & France herself, altho she does not permit, even in time of peace, the manufactures of any nation to be brought to England in other ships but of the nation manufacturing them. In the meantime she is taking all our vessels, which is all the war she can make on her side and indeed the style of Foster's correspondence is altogether a style of defiance. Always affectionately yours.”